

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A component management system comprising:

a component database ~~which registers~~ configured to register component data regarding a plurality of components which have been examined based on a predetermined criterion and including ~~their~~ examination results indicating a correlation between each of the plurality of components examined and the predetermined criteria;

a receiver ~~which receives~~ configured to receive information regarding components;

an updating section ~~which updates~~ configured to upate the component data registered in the component database ~~in accordance with an examination~~ based on the information received by said receiver; and

a selector ~~which selects~~ configured to select an arbitrary component from the plurality of components registered in the component database.

Claim 2 (Original): The component management system according to Claim 1, wherein:

said component data includes data representing whether each of the plurality of components is a component admitted to be purchased based on the examination results; and

said selector selects an arbitrary component from the plurality of components to be purchased, based on the component data.

Claim 3 (Original): The component management system according to Claim 1, wherein the component data includes data representing whether each of the plurality of components is a component admitted to be purchased based on the examination results, and said selector warns that a component which is not admitted to be purchased is selected, based on the component data.

Claim 4 (Original): The component management system according to Claim 1, wherein the component data includes a recommendation to use a component based on the examination results.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, wherein the component data includes a rating of a component determined by the examination results.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 5, wherein:

the at least one component is ~~examined~~ re-examined based on the information [component data] received by said receiver; and
said updating section includes
a register which registers, in the component database, ~~the~~ updated component data regarding the ~~plurality of components, which~~ at least one component that has been ~~examined~~

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re-examined, and

an adjuster which adjusts a rating of each of the plurality of components in accordance with results of re-examination based on the information received by said receiver.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising

a system ~~which provides a~~ configured to provide the predetermined criterion based on which each of the plurality of components is examined, and

wherein the component database ~~registers~~ configured to register further examination results in the component data regarding at least one component which satisfies the predetermined criterion.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising a system ~~which provides a~~ configured to provide the predetermined criterion based on which each of the plurality of components is examined, and

wherein the component data includes data representing whether each of the plurality of components satisfies the predetermined criterion.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

an input unit ~~which inputs~~ configured to input information for specifying a component;
and

a retriever ~~for retrieving~~ configured to retrieve a component which satisfies the input information from the component database.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising a catalogue database ~~which stores~~ configured to store an electronic catalogue specifically reporting information representing the plurality of components stored in the component database, and

wherein the component data registered in the component database is linked to information representing the electronic catalogue, so that the electronic catalogue can be accessed through the component data.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

an index-information storage ~~which stores~~ configured to store index information which can be an index for selecting a component; and

a reader ~~which reads~~ configured to read and ~~provides to provide~~, in response to a request, index information corresponding to the request from said index-information storage.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising an improvement/cessation database ~~storing~~ configured to store improvement/cessation information representing if any of the plurality of components represented by the information received by said receiver is improved, to be improved or not to

be manufactured any more, and

wherein said updating section ~~updates~~ is further configured to update the component data registered in the component database, based on the improvement/cessation information registered in the improvement/cessation database.

Claim 13 (Original): The component management system according to Claim 1, wherein said receiver is prepared commonly for a predetermined range of organizations.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising a terminal ~~which requests for~~ configured to request examination of a component.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising a terminal ~~which selects~~ configured to select a component for use in manufacturing a product[[,]] from ~~of~~ the plurality of components registered in the component database.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

an application terminal ~~which applies for purchasing~~ configured to purchase a component registered in the component database; and

a purchase terminal ~~which executes~~ configured to execute a process for purchasing the

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component in response to the applying for purchasing the component.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended) : The component management system according to Claim 1, further comprising

a second database ~~which stores~~ configured to store a part of or entire copy of the information stored in the component database; and

a terminal ~~which updates~~ configured to update said second database in accordance with a predetermined examination criterion.

Claim 18 (Original): A component management method comprising:
settling an admission criterion for admitting a component;
examining a component based on the admission criterion, and registering the component admitted by the examination in a component database;
receiving information regarding components;
updating the component data registered in the component database, in accordance with the examination based on the received information and
selecting an arbitrary component from the plurality of components registered in the component database based on the component data.

Claim 19 (Original): A component management method, comprising the steps of:
settling an admission criterion for admitting a component;
examining a component based on the admission criterion, and registering the

component admitted by the examination in a component database;

receiving improvement/cessation information about a component through a network;

updating the component database based on the received improvement/cessation information, thereby updating contents of the component database based on the improvement/cessation information; and

selecting a component which is to practically be used, from a plurality of components registered in the component database.

Claim 20 (Original): The method according to Claim 19, further comprising the steps of:

determining whether a component, included in the improvement/cessation information after being updated, can be a component to be purchased;

registering, in a case where it is determined that the component can be purchased, component information representing the determined component in the component database, and

lowering, in a case where it is determined that the component cannot be purchased, a rating of the component which has been determined as a component not to be purchased.

Claim 21 (Original): The method according to Claim 19, further comprising:
preparing electronic information which can serve as an index for selecting a component;
and
showing the electronic information, in response to a request for the information.

Claim 22 (Original): The method according to Claim 19, further comprising:
receiving the improvement/cessation information of components, and storing the
received information in an improvement/cessation database, and
updating component information stored in the component database, based on the
improvement/cessation information registered in the improvement/cessation database.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): A component management system comprising:
a component database ~~which registers~~ component data regarding a plurality of
components which have been examined based on a predetermined criterion and including ~~their~~
examination results indicating a correlation between each of the plurality of components
examined and the predetermined criteria;

a receiver ~~which receives~~ configured to receive information regarding the plurality of
components;

a component-data updating section ~~which updates~~ configured to update the component
data registered in the component database, in accordance with predetermined examination
based on the information received by said receiver; and

selection means ~~which selects~~ for selecting an arbitrary component from the plurality of
components registered in the component database.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): A component management system comprising:
a component database ~~which registers~~ configured to register component data regarding

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a plurality of components which have been examined based on a predetermined criterion and including ~~their~~ examination results indicating a correlation between each of the plurality of components examined and the predetermined criteria;

a receiver ~~which receives~~ configured to receive information regarding components; and
an updating section ~~which updates~~ configured to update the component data registered in the component database in accordance with an examination based on the information received by said receiver.

Claim 25 (Previously Presented): The component management system according to Claim 24, wherein:

said component data includes data representing whether each of the plurality of components is a component admitted to be purchased based on the examination results.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented) The component management system according to Claim 24, wherein

the component data includes data representing whether each of the plurality of components is a component admitted to be purchased based on the examination results.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): The component management system according to Claim 24, wherein the component data includes a recommendation to use a component based on the examination results.

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Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, wherein the component data includes a rating of a component determined by the examination results.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 28, wherein:

~~the~~ each component is examined based on the information received by said receiver;
and

said updating section includes
a register ~~which registers~~ configured to register, in the component database, the component data regarding the plurality of components, which ~~has~~ have been examined, and
an adjuster ~~which adjusts~~ configured to adjust a rating of each of the plurality of components in accordance with results of re-examination based on the information received by said receiver.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising:

a system ~~which provides~~ configured to provide a predetermined criterion based on which each of the plurality of components is examined, and

wherein the component database ~~registers~~ is configured to register the component data regarding at least one component which satisfies the predetermined criterion.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising a system ~~which provides a~~ configured to provide the predetermined criterion based on which each of the plurality of components is examined, and wherein the component data includes data representing whether each of the plurality of components satisfies the predetermined criterion.

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising:
an input unit ~~which inputs~~ configured to input information for specifying a component;
and
a retriever ~~for retrieving~~ configured to receive a component which satisfies the input information from the component database.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising a catalogue database ~~which stores~~ configured to store an electronic catalogue specifically reporting information representing the plurality of components stored in the component database, and
wherein the component data registered in the component database is linked to information representing the electronic catalogue, so that the electronic catalogue can be accessed through the component data.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to

Claim 24, further comprising:

an index-information storage ~~which stores~~ configured to store index information which can be an index for selecting a component; and

a reader ~~which reads~~ configured to read and ~~provides to provide~~, in response to a request, index information corresponding to the request from said index-information storage.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising an improvement/cessation database ~~storing~~ configured to store improvement/cessation information representing if any of the plurality of components represented by the information received by said receiver is improved, to be improved or not to be manufactured any more, and

wherein said updating section ~~updates~~ is further configured to update the component data registered in the component database, based on the improvement/cessation information registered in the improvement/cessation database.

Claim 36 (Previously Presented): The component management system according to Claim 24, wherein said receiver is prepared commonly for a predetermined range of organizations.

Claim 37 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising a terminal ~~which requests for~~ configured to request examination of a component.

Claim 38 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising a terminal ~~which selects~~ configured to select a component for use in manufacturing a product, of the plurality of components registered in the component database.

Claim 39 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising:

an application terminal ~~which applies for purchasing~~ configured to apply to purchase a component registered in the component database; and

a purchase terminal ~~which executes~~ configured to execute a process for purchasing the component in response to the applying for purchasing the component.

Claim 40 (Currently Amended): The component management system according to Claim 24, further comprising:

a second database ~~which stores~~ configured to store a part of or entire copy of the information stored in the component database; and

a terminal ~~which updates~~ configured to update said second database in accordance with a predetermined examination criterion.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): A component management method comprising:
settling an admission criterion for admitting a component;

examining a component based on the admission criterion, and registering the component admitted by the examination in a component database;
receiving information regarding components;
updating the component data registered in the component database, in accordance with an examination based on the received information.

Claim 42 (Previously Presented): A component management method, comprising the steps of:

settling an admission criterion for admitting a component;
examining a component based on the admission criterion, and registering the component admitted by the examination in a component database;
receiving improvement/cessation information about a component through a network;
and
updating the component database based on the received improvement/cessation information, thereby updating contents of the component database based on the improvement/cessation information.

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 42, further comprising the steps of:

determining whether a component, included in the improvement/cessation information after being updated, can be a component to be purchased;
registering, in a case where it is determined that the component can be purchased,

component information representing the determined component in the component database;
and

lowering, in a case where it is determined that the component cannot be purchased, a
rating of the component which has been determined as a component not to be purchased.

Claim 44 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 42, further
comprising:

preparing electronic information which can serve as an index for selecting a component;
and

showing the electronic information, in response to a request for the information.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 42, further
comprising:

receiving the improvement/cessation information of components, and storing the
received information in an improvement/cessation database; and

updating component information stored in the component database, based on the
improvement/cessation information registered in the improvement/cessation database.

Claim 46 (Currently Amended): A component management system comprising:
a component database ~~which registers~~ configured to register component data regarding
a plurality of components which have been examined based on a predetermined criterion and
including ~~their~~ examination results indicating a correlation between each of the plurality of

components examined and the predetermined criteria;

a receiver ~~which receives~~ configured to receive information regarding the plurality of components;

a component-data updating section ~~which updates~~ configured to update the component data registered in the component database, in accordance with predetermined examination based on the information received by said receiver.

Claim 47 (Currently Amended): A component management system comprising:

means for storing component data regarding a plurality of components which have been examined based on a predetermined criterion and including ~~their examination results~~ examination results indicating a correlation between each of the plurality of components examined and the predetermined criteria;

means for receiving information regarding components; and

means for updating the component data stored in said storing means, in accordance with an examination based on the information received by said receiving means.

Claim 48 (New): A component management system comprising:

a component database including at least two different groups of component data, each group of component data further including component identification data identifying components in that group based on a common component characteristic, component source identification data identifying a source from which each identified component can be obtained and recommendation data setting forth recommendation information for components in each of

at least two different component groups;

an input unit configured to input information specifying a need for a desired component sharing the common component characteristic of the components in at least one of the at least two different component groups; and

a search and retrieve unit configured to search for and to retrieve desired data from the component database, the desired data identifying at least one component sharing the common component characteristic of the components of the desired component, wherein:

the search for and retrieval of the desired data are based on the input information and the component data.

Claim 49 (New): The component management system according to Claim 48, wherein:

the recommendation data setting forth recommendation information for components in each of at least two different component group includes at least two different levels of recommendation.

Claim 50 (New): The component management system according to Claim 48, wherein:

the component data includes a relative rating of at least some of the components.

Claim 51 (New): The component management system according to Claim 48, wherein:

a cessation entry is included in the component database, the cessation entry indicating if any of the components of either of the at least two different groups is no longer to be manufactured.

Claim 52 (New): The component management system according to Claim 48, wherein:
the input unit is part of a terminal and the desired component sharing the common
component characteristic of the components in at least one of the at least two different
component groups is to be used in manufacturing a product.

Claim 53 (New): The component management system according to Claim 52, wherein:
the terminal is configured as a design terminal and a plurality of desired components
are determined for use in manufacturing the product.

Claim 54 (New): The component management system according to Claim 52, wherein:
the terminal is configured as a purchase terminal and a plurality of desired components
are determined for purchase and use in manufacturing the product

Claim 55 (New): The component management system according to Claim 54, wherein:
the purchase terminal is further configured to place an order with the source identified
by the component source identification data or at least some of the plurality of desired
components that have been determined for purchase and use in manufacturing the product.

Claim 56 (New): A component management method comprising the steps of:
forming a component database including at least two different groups of component
data, each group of component data further including component identification data identifying
components in that group based on a common component characteristic, component source

identification data identifying a source from which each identified component can be obtained and recommendation data setting forth recommendation information for components in each of at least two different component groups;

inputting information specifying a need for a desired component sharing the common component characteristic of the components in at least one of the at least two different component groups;

searching for desired data from the component database based on the input information and the component data, the desired data identifying at least one component sharing the common component characteristic of the components of the desired component; and

retrieving the desired data found in the searching step.

Claim 57 (New): The component management method according to Claim 56, wherein:
the recommendation data setting forth recommendation information for components in each of at least two different component group includes at least two different levels of recommendation.

Claim 58 (New): The component management method according to Claim 56, wherein:
the component data includes a relative rating of at least some of the components.

Claim 59 (New): The component management method according to Claim 56, wherein:
a cessation entry is included in the component database, the cessation entry indicating if any of the components of either of the at least two different groups is no longer to be

manufactured.

Claim 60 (New): The component management method according to Claim 56, wherein:
the inputting step is done using a terminal and the desired component sharing the
common component characteristic of the components in at least one of the at least two different
component groups is to be used in manufacturing a product.

Claim 61 (New): The component management method according to Claim 60, wherein:
the terminal is a design terminal and the searching and retrieving steps are performed
to determine a plurality of desired components as part of designing the product.

Claim 62 (New): The component management method according to Claim 60, wherein:
the terminal is a purchase terminal and the searching and retrieving steps are performed
to determine a plurality of desired components to be purchased, and
using the purchased plurality of desired components in manufacturing the product

Claim 63 (New): The component management method according to Claim 62, further
comprising:

placing a purchase order with the source identified by the component source
identification data for at least some of the plurality of desired components that have been
determined for purchase using the purchase terminal.